

NCR SAREX

Written by 2nd Lt Pamela Morris

Tuesday, 18 August 2009 13:46 - Last Updated Thursday, 27 August 2009 18:40

The states of the North Central Region of Civil Air Patrol combined this weekend for joint SAREX activities. The exercise had multiple tornadoes touching down Saturday night between Phillipsburg and Belleville, KS. Aircraft reported multiple ELTs going off in the area and damage reported to the local infrastructure. Ground teams were tasked to take Damage Assessment (DA) digital photos of nearby dams, airfields, hospital, bridges, and power plants.

A Ground Team from the Flint Hills Composite Squadron, consisting of four Seniors and one Cadet, was led by Major Jeffrey Morris. After a safety and SITREP briefing, route planning commenced by the team to check on the towns and countryside in the area for damage assessment. The team used a datalogging GPS device to track GPS locations to be matched up with digital pictures taken along the route.

Capt Mark Lahan drove the route planned and navigated by Maj Morris while Capt Linette Lahan kept the log of the sightings and reported conditions. Cadet Hillary Kebbel operated the DF and searched for any sounds of an ELT along the route.

The team searched the airfields and hospitals in cities and towns en-route to Bellville to assess damage and to ensure that there were no ELT's broadcasting. 2nd Lt Pam Morris took photos at each location to later be matched up with the datalogger GPS data.

The Ground Team arrived at Bellville's airfield and Cadet Kebbel immediately picked up the sound of the ELT on 121.775 frequency on the DF. A search for the ELT was made more difficult as the signal was bouncing between metal buildings on the airfield, so a line search was initiated. While the ELT search was being conducted on the ground a CAP plane arrived overhead and circled the area to land.

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The aircrew from Wichita had picked up the ELT and DF'd to the same location, taking digital photos of the area along the way.

The line search was successful in locating the ELT. Photos of the location and the ELT 'find' were taken and the Ground Team resumed their tasking of checking for damage assessment along the route.

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